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The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 1 May 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing in order to draw your attention to the latest act of Palestinian terrorism perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

On Wednesday, 30 April, at approximately 1 a.m. (local time), a suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance to a pub near the United States embassy in the Israeli coastal city of Tel Aviv, scattering human remains throughout the area. A second bomber managed to flee the scene when his explosive device did not detonate, and currently remains at large. The terrorist was blocked from entering the popular tourist destination by an on-duty security officer, greatly minimizing the human costs of the attack, while unfortunately inflicting serious injury upon the guard himself. As it was, the force of the bomb, packed with nails and other projectiles to maximize the pain and suffering of the victims, killed three civilians and wounded 60 others, including six with serious to critical injuries. The three murdered in the attack were a French national, Dominique Caroline Hess, a young musician, Ran Baron, affiliated with a popular musical group known as The Israeli Peace Drummers, who use their music to advance peace and cooperation between groups and cultures worldwide, and a second musician, Yanai Weiss. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Hamas, and the Al Qassam Brigades have all claimed responsibility for the attack.

The seaside promenade in Tel Aviv, where the attack took place has been the target of several terrorist attacks in the past two years, including the Dolphinarium disco bombing which killed 22 Israeli civilians in June 2001, most of them teenagers.

Yesterday's terrorist attack is a striking and tragic demonstration of the nightmare of the globalization of terror. The attack was perpetrated by two British citizens who entered Israel from Gaza through Egypt, in order to attack a pub that is a known popular destination for international tourists, located close to the American

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Embassy. Moreover, the attack killed a French citizen, and wounded other foreign nationals.

Yesterday's bombing also reaffirms that innocent civilians in Israel continue to be deliberately and systematically targeted for murder. The cessation of Palestinian terrorism, including the reprehensible and criminal tactic of suicide bombings, is a fundamental precondition to a process of negotiation, which is the only means of achieving a just and sustainable peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

Israel renews, once again, its calls upon the Palestinian leadership to reject, finally and absolutely, the use and promotion of terrorism, including the elimination of incitement in Palestinian religious, educational and political institutions. The Palestinian side must take concerted, real and unrelenting actions to disarm, de-legitimize and bring to justice terrorist groups operating freely in its territory, in accordance with international obligations, Security Council resolutions and its own signed agreements. Anything less is totally unacceptable, endangers the lives of civilians and diminishes any hopes of peace. As long as the daily threat of Palestinian terrorism continues, Israel must continue to adopt the necessary preventive security measures in accordance with its indisputable right and duty to protect its citizens.

Israel calls upon the international community to reaffirm its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics and to use its authority to compel all regimes that sponsor and incite terrorism in the region to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with international law and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373 (2001).

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000, which document the criminal terrorist strategy for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan Gillerman
Ambassador